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THE GARDEN CALENDAR

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A radio talk delivered by Mr. W. R. Beattie, Bureau of Plant Industry, through Station WRC and 32 other stations associated with the National Broadcasting Company, December 10, 1929 at 1:10 p. m. Eastern Standard Time.

Dormant Spraying

On several occasions, I have mentioned the importance of controlling scale and other insects which injure deciduous fruit trees. This work can be done to best advantage during the winter when the trees are dormant or during the very early spring before new growth starts. There are two reasons why this is true, first, a stronger spray can be used at these periods without injury to the trees, and, second, a more complete application of the insecticide to the twigs and branches can be made after the leaves have fallen. Late fall and early spring spraying are effective for scale insects, and especially those on deciduous trees. The bark and branches of valuable trees should be examined at this time of the year for the presence of scale insects - small, scab-like growths which adhere closely to the bark. If any of these scale insects are present, the trees will need spraying.

The usual recommendation for controlling scale insects, and one which is rather generally applicable is to spray the trees thoroughly with lime sulphur or with one of the miscible oils or lubricating-oil emulsion sprays. These materials are sold under a variety of trade-names and can usually be obtained from stores handling seeds, gardening tools, machinery, fertilizers and insecticides.

It is highly desirable to have the scale insect identified, and to get a specific recommendation for treating it. In view of the fact that the treatment of these insects also varies somewhat in different parts of the country, we would recommend that you consult the Extension Division of your State College of Agriculture, or write to your Experiment Station for special information. Farmers' Bulletin No. 9-0-8 entitled "INFORMATION FOR FRUIT GROWERS ABOUT INSECTICIDES, SPRAYING APPARATUS, AND IMPORTANT INSECT PESTS," is now being reprinted. This bulletin is sent free upon application to the U. S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C., or it may be ordered through the station to which you are listening.

Christmas Trees

In sections where pines grow, especially in the Northeastern States, one sees at this time of the year automobiles and trucks city bound laden with Christmas trees. The devastation of the forests is now well under way and it seems to be difficult to stop this wanton destruction of our forests. In some sections the cutting of Christmas trees is being done intelligently under the direction of the State Forest Wardens and in this way is proving profitable to the owners of pine lands.

The Christmas tree market this time of year offers an opportunity to make a profit on an operation which, if properly done, will at the same time improve the farm woodland, and increase its value.

Cut your Christmas trees in such a way that the cutting will serve as a thinning and improvement cutting in the woods. That means that the trees to cut are the ones which are not needed to maintain a good stand of growing timber. Cut out the stunted and suppressed trees in overcrowded thickets. Cut out crooked or damaged trees. But don't cut so heavily as to leave open spaces in the woods. Don't cut the thriftiest, fastest-growing young trees in the stand; they are the trees most needed for commercial timber growth. Don't cut tops out of sound large trees. To do so destroys the tree's future value for timber purposes.

If the thinning yields some trees too spindly and scrawny for Christmas trees, such trees can be stripped of their branches and these used for wreaths or Christmas greens. Flat-sided trees can be placed in a corner or against a wall where they will serve their purpose as Christmas trees as well or better than perfectly round trees.

Growing Christmas trees in plantations near the large consuming centers has been found profitable by a number of land-owners who have suitable location and facilities, especially in localities which are distant from natural sources of supply. The trees can be harvested in from four to eight years after they are planted at the rate of 3,000 to 5,000 to the acre.

Lettuce

The use of lettuce on American tables has increased enormously during the past 10 years, in fact, the shipments of lettuce from California and other Western States to the eastern markets has increased at the rate of nearly 5,000 cars a year since 1920. In 1928, California alone shipped more than 33,000 cars of lettuce. Production of lettuce is really a great industry in sections where the soil and climatic conditions are adapted to growing the crop, especially the heading varieties. Lettuce is one of the most intensive and specialized of our vegetable crops from the standpoint of cultivation and handling, and the Department has just issued a new bulletin entitled Lettuce Growing, which deals primarily with the production of lettuce in the portion of the United States covered by these broadcasts, that is, east of the Rocky Mountains. It is Farmers' Bulletin No. 1-6-0-9 which will be sent free for the asking so long as the supply lasts. This bulletin is well illustrated and includes information on the varieties of lettuce being grown, the different methods of planting, also a short treatise on the insects and diseases of the crop.